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PROD 5

DCI/ICS 82-3908
23 April 1982**LOGGED**

MEMORANDUM FOR:

[redacted]
Director, Intelligence Community Staff

VIA:

[redacted] *at*
Director, Office of Assessment and Evaluation

FROM:

[redacted]
Office of Assessment and Evaluation

SUBJECT:

National Intelligence Warning System

27 APR 1982

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1. You will recall that several months ago the DCI asked for comments on the "National Intelligence Warning System". What should be its mission, organization, size, etc? We provided written comments (see attachment 1), a discussion paper was circulated and the matter was subsequently discussed at the NFIB. After a rather lengthy gestation period, it now appears that the outlines of a decision are about ready to emerge. Fred Hutchinson, who is acting as NIO for Warning as well as Vice Chairman of the NIC, has incorporated the major elements of that decision into a draft DCI memo to the NFIB (attachment 2). He asks our advice on three points:

- Are the major judgements in accord with the IC Staff position?
- Is there a requirement for another NFIB discussion?
- Would the IC Staff be content to work out further details in the Warning Working Group? (S)

2. I recommend that I be permitted to respond to Fred along the following lines:

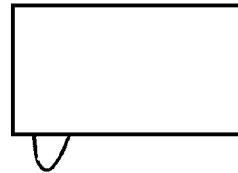
- We have already provided our judgements in writing on these subjects. We haven't changed those judgements but are certainly prepared to accept whatever decisions the DCI makes. We do however have compunctions about para 2.a. of the draft memo. Frankly, we don't know what it means.
- We see no requirement for another NFIB discussion, and
- We are willing to work out whatever details are necessary in the Warning Working Group. (S)

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SUBJECT: National Intelligence Warning System

3. I really do not think this is a matter that merits further NFIB attention. Remanding it to the Warning Working Group seems entirely appropriate and in no way reduces our influence over the matter. (U)



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Attachments:
As stated

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SUBJECT: National Intelligence Warning System

Distribution:

1 Orig - D/ICS
21 - DD/ICS
31 - D/OA&E
41 - OA&E [REDACTED]
51 - OA&E/Subject
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DCI/ICS/OA&E [REDACTED] -- 23 April 1982)

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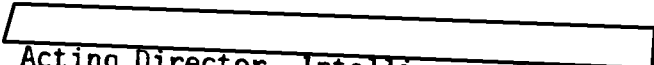
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DCI/ICS 81-0218
3 September 1981

MEMORANDUM FOR: National Intelligence Officer for Warning

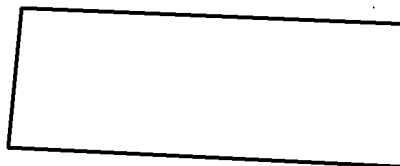
FROM: 
Acting Director, Intelligence Community Staff

SUBJECT: National Intelligence Warning System

Fred,

Attached are the comments you requested at the last Warning Working Group meeting, outlining IC Staff ideas for upgrading the National Intelligence Warning System.

Attachment:
A Concept for An Improved
National I&W System



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(13)

Unclassified upon
removal of Attachment

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SUBJECT: National Intelligence Warning System

Distribution:

1 Original - Addressee
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A Concept for an Improved National I&W System

Summary

The IC Staff believes that the NIWS can and should be improved. A principal step toward accomplishing that would be creation of a small management-oriented staff to support the NIO/W in execution of the duties already assigned him under DCID 1/5. That staff would assist the NIO in his national coordination role, bring about near term organizational and procedural improvements, and plan for a longer-term developmental effort. Its billets would be drawn from reconfiguration of the present Strategic Warning Staff.

We believe also that the efforts of an improved NIWS should be primarily directed toward those matters which pose the greatest threat to the US--military attack by the USSR or its surrogates. Attempting to anticipate all threats to US interests risks overloading the NIWS. The IC Staff, therefore, recommends a conservative approach to the "no-surprise doctrine."

Beyond that, the IC Staff sees the NIWS as a fairly loose-knit group, dedicated to assuring that the Intelligence Community operates in a fashion to assure the earliest possible warning of major threats to US interests. The best way to accomplish that is by better organizing existing intelligence capabilities, rather than attempting to create a separate set uniquely dedicated to I&W.

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1. The following provides the preliminary thoughts of the Intelligence Community Staff on the subject of how the National Intelligence Warning System might be improved. These are necessarily general, in keeping with the early stage of the deliberation. Positions taken here should not be interpreted as prior approval for any resource requirement. Such requirements would of course have to be handled through normal resource management channels.

2. By way of background we note that DCID 1/5 dated 23 May 1979 established a National Intelligence Warning System and prescribed its principal components. It made the DDCI responsible for oversight, created a National Intelligence Officer for Warning, made the Strategic Warning Staff responsible to him, and established the Warning Working Group to coordinate Community warning matters. It assigned a rather extensive list of responsibilities to the NIO/W, among them the requirements to advise on matters affecting resource management and collection tasking, to further work in I&W methodology, to develop plans and procedures for support of the DCI in crisis situations, to promote communication within the Community, etc. We note that the only staff provided for those purposes was an assistant NIO and that, until recently, the NIO/W himself had extensive other duties. We also note that the Warning Working Group previously recommended to the DDCI that the current Strategic Warning Staff be reconfigured to provide the billets deemed necessary to redress the staffing shortfall.

Mission

3. A logical point to begin consideration of any system is with its mission. This may be especially useful with respect to the National I&W System because disagreement exists within the Community on the legitimate scope of the I&W mission. Specifically, the question seems to be whether I&W's purview should be confined to the threat of military attack by the Soviet Union or its surrogates, or if it has a broader responsibility to warn of any impending threat to U.S. interests. In jargon, the alternatives seem to be "big W" versus the "no-surprise doctrine." It is important to note these need not be mutually exclusive alternatives. To be effective, an I&W effort focused on the "big W" threat has to be conducted against a backdrop of international political and economic considerations--matters which normally attach to the broader "no-surprise" perspective. Our choice therefore need not be a binary selection between "big W" and "no surprise." Instead we might ask what point along the conceptual spectrum anchored by those two extremes will provide an appropriate balance.

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4. Our answer is that the point should lie toward the "big W" end. We recognize this is not necessarily in keeping with a strict interpretation of the current DCID 1/5 definition of warning: "...to avoid surprise to the President, the NSC, and the Armed Forces of the United States by foreign events of major importance to the security of the United States." We also recognize that the "no-surprise doctrine" stems from hard experience with charges of previous intelligence failures. Nevertheless, intelligence resources have limitations. We therefore caution against the possibility that our National I&W effort be dissipated by attempting too much. We recommend a conservative approach to the "no-surprise doctrine."

Process

5. The process of a National I&W system might be broken into three basic components.

- the orderly and responsive tasking of collection requirements,
- analysis of the collected data to assure the earliest and most reliable detection of incipient threats, and
- dissemination of resultant warnings to decisionmakers in a clear, persuasive, and rapid manner.

Each of these components raises certain key questions in terms of a National I&W System.

6. Tasking: A major question exists here regarding degree of centralization. We certainly do not endorse a national version of DoD's Collection Coordination Facility. However, if our task is to assure "orderly" I&W collection tasking then some coordination of competing requirements seems desirable. This is not to say that we support a system that would superimpose a new I&W management structure on the existing mechanisms for tasking. Indeed, that risks the possibility of slowing the whole process, which is entirely contrary to the interests of the I&W mission. In many cases, however, it might be useful to consult with a functional element of national standing such as the NIWS, that could advise on the relative merits of competing requirements. The modalities of such an arrangement would of course have to be worked out.

7. Analysis: This component of the I&W process raises a rather large number of basic questions: Is a central I&W analytical node necessary? If so, what should be its organizational outlines? How would it relate to the existing I&W organizations? What should be the nature of the analysis performed by this

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central group? What should be the relationship of the national I&W analyst to his general intelligence counterpart? This is fairly far removed from normal IC Staff responsibilities, and we offer our comments accordingly.

8. A separate staff is probably necessary to provide the NIO/W and the DDCI a source of independent and alternative judgments. The element should not, however, be a "super-I&W center" which duplicates the functions of existing centers. Instead, it should employ the services of generalists who are schooled in the techniques and methods of analysis, who can uncover weak points in the logic supporting a warning analysis, and who can generate alternative hypotheses to account for the data in question. They would serve as devil's advocates and challenge the conventional wisdom.

9. Should the NIWS incorporate a similar core of experts in substantive intelligence matters, e.g., regional or functional analysts? We don't think so. DCIU 1/5 now assigns such responsibilities to the substantive NIOs. That minimizes overlap, makes assignment of responsibility more clear, and avoids duplication. One of I&W's persistent organizational problems has been confusion about the division of labor between the I&W analyst and his general intelligence counterpart. We can go a long way toward rationalizing that division if we adopt the principle that the NIWS is an overlay of specialists on the existing intelligence establishment. Its function is to "facilitate" the warning process, challenge conclusions and, in extremis, raise an independent warning voice. The real substance of a judgment, however, should remain principally with the current or estimative intelligence establishment.

10. The term "facilitate", used above, has two principal aspects in our opinion. The first is what we might call "operational", the sort of duties which would be performed in an alert center. Included would be:

- receiving all electrically transmitted communications,
- initially screening the data contained in those communications for anomalies,
- assuring that more specialized analysts are consulted when appropriate, and within an appropriate time,
- that all germane information is brought to bear on the analysis,
- that other elements within the I&W community are kept informed and have a chance to coordinate the analysis,
- that, if needed, consumers are informed of the analysis clearly and quickly.

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11. There is another aspect of the term "facilitate" that would be accomplished outside an alert center. It might be referred to as "developmental", and would be the work of a specialized staff element. (More on this in paragraph 17.)

12. Dissemination. The basic question we see with respect to dissemination has to do with the inevitable decentralization of authority inherent in the NIWS. The system will be composed of members whose primary mission is to serve different masters e.g., DIA serves JCS, CIA serves the NSC, etc. The glue that holds them together will be simple recognition that their respective missions can all be performed better if they cooperate. Realistically, we must expect limits to that cooperation. On occasion, CIA may have to be close with a piece of HUMINT. On other occasions, DIA may be unable to share certain sensitive operational military information. Consequently, it might be useful for members to stipulate that:

- The NIWS will not restrict the right of any member to disseminate its own warning notice to its own consumers.

- But, any NIWS member choosing to issue a warning should--time allowing--have the obligation to circulate it before publication to other NIWS members. In turn, those members should have the obligation of advising whether they hold information which runs contrary to the warning. If sensitive information does exist, then a way should be found to get it to an appropriate principal, with appropriate security safeguards, and avoid the confusion of an errant warning.

13. One further point on dissemination: a NIWS should take full advantage of the diversity of its membership by fostering competition of ideas. This should be built into whatever family of products is devised. For example, a daily status report ought to include provision for footnotes, exceptions, or whatever. A consumer can find these very informative.

Structure

14. In general, the structure of a NIWS should not be elaborate. It should be built on the existing set of I&W centers, serving to amalgamate and systematize their operations. Membership could be based on several requirements:

- each member organization should have a significant I&W analytical capability,

- each would agree to consult closely and continuously with other members,

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- - a minimum level of security clearance would be granted analysts in each of the centers,
- a secure, dedicated communications system would link all centers, allowing for analyst conferencing and non-record communications, and
- each center would be accorded its own geo-topical specialty, depending on its particular mission and capability, but no center would be restricted from any area of inquiry it may choose to pursue.

15. A major consideration in structuring a National I&W System is how to meld it with the existing DoD I&W System. It might be advantageous to regard the two as companion systems with interlocking directorates. Specifically, CIA, DIA, NSA and INR would comprise the NIWS principal members. Subordinate standing could be provided the U&S commands as regional (EUCOM, LANTCOM, PACOM, SOUTHCOM, REDCOM) or specialized (SAC, MAC) centers, with the provision that DIA could represent them in NIWS management matters.

16. As indicated earlier, the specific resources included by each organization within the NIWS structure would be restricted to those primarily dedicated to I&W, e.g., alert center personnel, attendant communication facilities, etc. (The IC Staff is currently in the process of prescribing how such accounting will be done.)

Management

17. The NIWS management need not be significantly different than at present. It might be advantageous, however, to create a fairly senior steering group representing consumer interests to provide policy direction. Its composition could be:

DDCI - Chairman
Defense
State
NSC
JCS

The Warning Working Group, in largely its present configuration, would respond to Steering Group guidance and provide mid-level direction to the NIWS. An expanded staff reporting to the NIO/W would be responsible for executing WKG guidance and supplying staff support for day-to-day functions. These functions could fall into two broad categories.

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- the daily conduct of substantive business, e.g., issuing national warning documents as necessary, conducting reviews of potential threat areas, challenging the conventional wisdom, etc., and,

- conducting longer term developmental efforts, including organizational improvements, capability studies, liaison with relevant academic, business and foreign contacts, methodological work, resource management, etc.

The size of this staff would be modest, probably about six-to-eight professionals with provision for contractor support. In keeping with the Warning Working Group's previous recommendation on this subject, the billets would be drawn from a reconfigured Strategic Warning Staff. The matter of how best to man those six-to-eight billets is bothersome, involving the relative merits and demerits of rotational assignments, reimbursable billets, etc.

18. As pointed out earlier, the nature of the NIWS will be largely voluntary, authority will be decentralized, and actions will be more cooperative than concerted. That may be acceptable, even desirable, with respect to substantive intelligence considerations, but for longer term developmental efforts that require expenditure of scarce resources, it can be a great disadvantage. It makes getting agreement on system-wide problems like communications or ADP standards very difficult. Management must therefore provide incentives to secure cooperation. One approach to be considered is centralized funding, i.e., the national level should completely fund any system improvements deemed to be required for national purposes. This approach has worked well for NSA with respect to its CSG support to Theater Commands. DIA, on the other hand, has attempted to have each member of the DOD I&W system separately fund its share of system-wide improvements, and progress has been somewhat slow.

Agenda

19. DCID 1/5 assigns ample tasks. In addition to the daily substantive business, procedural measures can be taken to assure better communications, more comprehensive analysis, a wider sharing of data, more rational collection tasking, and a more orderly set of warning products. Also, the WWG recently articulated a list of resource requirements for I&W through 1987--more manpower, improved surge capacity, more and better HUMINT, improved preparations for introduction of new collection systems, and better communications. An improved NIWS could be instrumental in orchestrating the effective and efficient acquisition of these new capabilities.

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